

3.7. Patient aggression and patient-initiated violence

3.7.1. Policy

Our practice is responsible for providing a safe working environment; however, patient aggression and patient-initiated violence in healthcare settings can be an issue.

3.7.2. Procedure

To mitigate the risk of patient aggression and patient-initiated violence, our practice has the following strategies in place:

- A zero tolerance towards violence policy, which **is displayed prominently in the reception and waiting area.**
- A duress alarm system is installed that the practice team can use if a patient is threatening or violent.

Where a patient displays aggression or violence, our general practitioners have the right to discontinue the care of that patient. This includes the practitioner ending the professional relationship during a consultation or by letter or telephone, depending on safety considerations. A record is kept of this process when undertaken, and of any subsequent contact that the patient has with the practice. Our practitioners will, however, provide emergency care to patients whose care has been ceased in accordance with their professional and ethical obligation (refer to **Section 7.13 – Refusal to treat a patient**).